

DOOR TO DOOR

1. Going door to door or "doorknocking" is the oldest and best outreach tool there is. When people see a face rather than just a flier, they will feel more willing to learn about the organization and get involved.
2. Being sought out by organization members makes people feel important. When you show that you are willing to take time to talk to people on a one-to-one basis, it shows you care about their input and ideas.
3. Fliers and newsletters may not get to everyone in the neighborhood. By going door to door, you can be sure that people know what the organization is up to.
4. Setting up "door knocking days" is not hard, but takes volunteers and good organization.
 - a. Get organization members to commit two weekend days or three weeknights.
 - b. Identify what your boundaries are for targeting your outreach (the building? block? neighborhood)?
 - c. Split your team into pairs and assign each pair a part of your outreach target area. If people are more familiar with a particular floor of a building block, or part of a neighborhood, have them go where they know the most people and are most comfortable.
 - d. Give each pair some literature about the organization, your latest meeting flier or the most recent copy of your newsletter. You should always have something to leave with people when you are finished speaking with them.
 - e. Bringing a survey with you door to door is a great technique. Not only are you getting people's ideas and input, but you are seeing them face to face.

NEWSLETTERS

1. A newsletter can be the communication lifeline between the members of the neighborhood association, the neighborhood, the community board, elected officials and anyone else who is important to your group. The newsletter lets everyone know what you are doing and what you have accomplished. Read the next two pages to get some hints on how to put together a newsletter.
 2. Your neighborhood association newsletter can be a valuable communication tool, letting ideas flow within your association, to outside group and to elected officials. A newsletter maintains contact with your members and enlists their support when you need it most. It also keeps people posted on how hard the group has been working to improve your neighborhood.
 3. At a general meeting, nominate someone to develop the newsletter committee. The committee should include someone on the block with experience, or an interest in writing or editing. The newsletter does not have to be fancy. Information is more important than an elaborate newsletter that says nothing.
 4. At the following neighborhood association meeting, a newsletter staff member should take notes on committee reports and a budget for the newsletter should be established.
- * The Committee Decides:
- a. The content of the newsletter
 - News From the Steering Committee
 - Committee Reports
 - Merchant and/or Volunteer of the Month
 - Who's Who on the Block
 - Events and Happenings
 - Personal Announcements
 - Elected Officials - Who They Are and What They are Doing
 - Editorials
 - Letters to the Editor
 - Children's Column

The possibilities are only limited by the imagination of the committee.

- b. The length of the newsletter

The newsletter can be as short as one page.

- c. The name and design

You can use your group's letterhead or a new design for the newsletter.

d. The frequency of publication

Be consistent! If your newsletter comes out at the same time each month, people will begin to expect and anticipate it.

e. Who will receive the newsletter

Almost all neighborhood associations distribute the newsletter to all residents, members or not. You may decide to distribute it to merchants, elected officials, and other groups or agencies in your community.

5. After the staff gathers the reports and other articles to be included in the newsletter, the information should be edited and rewritten. Aim for a consistent style.
6. When typing your articles, leave 1/4 inch around the edges and between columns to make your newsletter more attractive.
7. Use pressure graphics, available at art supply stores, to make professional-looking headlines like the ones you see here. Or, some photocopy shops can make headlines for you using new desktop publishing technology at surprisingly low cost. Collect small pictures with good dark/light contrast to use as graphics.
8. There are lots of ways to get your newsletter printed. Contact the local school, Church, or Community Board and ask for the use of their copier or mimeograph machine. Ask a local printer to do it free or for a reduced rate. Offer to give the printer a credit line saying that the printer donated it, and encouraging readers to use this printer for their printing needs. If a printer will not do it, ask the merchants association if they would like to help (give them some free ad space and MANY THANKS!) If all else fails, you will have to pay for it. Shop around for the best price, and you can sell ads to defray your costs. Here are a few hints for selling ads:
 - Stress to merchants the interdependence of commercial and residential areas in a neighborhood -- how the health of one depends on the health of the other.
 - Encourage readers to patronize your advertisers, and to tell the merchants that they saw their ad in the newsletter.
 - You may want to give bargains for larger ads - i.e. \$10.00 per 1/4 page, \$17.50 per 1/2 page.
9. Call a meeting of your building and/or block captains. Ask them to distribute your newsletter form door to door. Make sure that everyone gets a copy. If kids help out with distribution, which they often do, be sure to recognize them in future issues. Remember that recognizing volunteers in your newsletter can be a valuable tool for building team spirit.

10. Solicit feedback from your members. After several issues, readers could be asked:

- Do they like the newsletter?
- What columns are most/least helpful or interesting?
- Any suggestions for future block association programs and activities?

MEMBERSHIP DRIVES AND LISTS

1. Having an annual membership drive where a day or a week is dedicated to bringing in new members and spreading the word in your community about your association can be an important outreach activity. You can bring new members into the group while letting the wider community know what you are up to and who you are.
2. Set up a table at a key site in your community where lots of people go or pass by. In front of a supermarket, bank or favorite store. Have plenty of the following:
 - Association Newsletters
 - Fliers announcing upcoming meetings and events
 - Sign-up sheets for membership
 - Surveys for residents to fill out about what issues are important to them, what are the best meeting times, etc.
3. Make sure that no one is left alone at the table - this should be a group effort! The more leaders at the table, the better. People will be eager to talk to anyone with information and knowledge.
4. Keeping updated membership lists is important for your outreach work. Make sure you have a "sign-in" sheet at every meeting and event you hold. Establish a "Membership" committee that is responsible for keeping the lists updated as well as other outreach activities.
5. Membership lists can be the foundation for a "Phone Tree" to get the word out to members and non-members when forces need to be mobilized and people need to be informed about an important issue or upcoming event. All members should pitch in and take a part of the list when the "Phone Tree" needs to be activated. Getting a phone call is always more effective than just sending a flier.

TIPS FOR WRITING PRESS RELEASES

- 1) A press release is a story you write about your issue and give to the paper to publish.
- 2) It must be about something that is of interest to a large number of people, but it must be done either just before or just after the event.
- 3) The press release should be about something that is happening right now, and must be done either just before or just after the event.
- 4) Be sure to include the who, what, when, where and why.
- 5) Write a catchy, informative opening sentence summarizing major activity.
- 6) Use some good quotes from leaders and their names.
- 7) Keep it short, and use good grammar.
- 8) Include "big names" as attendees to draw attention to your story.
- 9) Feature stories, which can be released any time, do not depend on how up-to-date they are. They can be general information and public relation pieces.

How to Get Press to Attend

- 1) Send a press announcement announcing meeting five days ahead and follow-up with phone calls.
 - a. A press announcement should be brief - one paragraph which includes facts and name of contact person for the organization.
 - b. It must contain name of organization, place, date, and time of meeting.
 - c. Do not invite the press unless you are sure the meeting will be attended.
- 2) Send the announcement to both the editor and the reporter who normally covers the type of event you are having i.e. political, neighborhood, etc.
- 3) Prepare press packages including the following: Press announcement, press releases, short biography of the organization, fact sheet and biographical information on the leadership.
- 4) Give the press package to the press when they enter the meeting.
- 5) Identify a group of leaders to talk with the newspeople.
- 6) Have a leader call and thank the press after the story for their interest.

DATE PAPER CAN
USE THE STORY

NAME AND
ADDRESS OF GROUP

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
10 AM January 16, 1979

The Fruitvale Theater Coalition
3914 E. 14th St.
Oakland, CA 94601
January 15, 1979

DATE MAILED

HEADLINE

"Fruitvale Citizens Win Theater Victory"

STORY: BEGIN
ABOUT 1/3 OF
THE WAY DOWN
THE PAGE

Residents of the Fruitvale Community are celebrating the victory won after a six-month battle with the United Artist Theater, Corp. of San Francisco to have the abandoned Fruitvale Theater torn down. Demolition began yesterday of the burned-out structure which had been vacant for more than 10 years. More than 200 neighborhood people consistently pressured the theater owners since July by picketing UATC offices and demonstrating in front of the homes of Robert and Marshall Naify, executives of UATC. Promises to begin demolition were finally kept after impatient residents staged a final protest last week in San Francisco, UATC, a multi-million dollar corporation with over 600 theaters across the nation, was forced to comply with the residents' demands. This victory proved to the community that they could remove the conditions of blight and decay from their neighborhood. The Fruitvale Theater Coalition is a member group of Oakland Community Organizations.

(For more information contact Fran Matterese)

MARK TO SHOW
END OF STORY

NAME OF PERSON
WHOM PAPER CAN GET IN TOUCH WITH.

IF THE RELEASE IS LONGER THAN
ONE PAGE, WRITE "MORE" IN THE
LOWER RIGHT HAND CORNER.